

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A system for providing auxiliary content to a client during download of primary
2 content from a server, comprising:
3 a server network comprising a download management server, a customer database
4 that stores user information, and a primary content database that stores primary content;
5 a client console connectable for establishing a communications link through a
6 bi-directional communications network to the download management server; and
7 at the client console, local storage for storing a user identifier and auxiliary
8 content, wherein the auxiliary content is stored in the local storage prior to download of
9 the primary content from the download management server;
10 wherein the user identifier is uploaded from the client console to the download
11 management server, access is enabled to requested primary content in the primary content
12 database, and the auxiliary content stored in the local storage device is played by the
13 client console during download of the requested primary content.

1 2. The system according to claim 1, wherein the auxiliary content is variable based
2 on a user preference.

1 3. The system according to claim 2, wherein the client preference is determined by
2 prompting the client to input information settings, and by providing the client with a

3 selection of one or more individual content choices and one or more content category
4 choices.

1 4. The system according to claim 1, wherein the auxiliary content is variable based
2 on a distributor preference.

1 5. The system according to claim 4, wherein the distributor preference is determined
2 first by having the download management server send the client preference data usable to
3 assign content before sending the requested content, and second by having the client
4 console execute the content stored in the local storage according to the preference data.

1 6. The system according to claim 5, wherein the preference data can be selected
2 from one or more individual content choices and one or more content category choices.

1 7. The system according to claim 1, wherein the auxiliary content can be acquired
2 and distributed to the local storage over the communications network.

1 8. The system according to claim 7, wherein the local storage is a hard disk drive.

1 9. The system according to claim 1, wherein the client console further comprises a
2 local fixed storage device disposed internally or externally of the client, wherein
3 requested primary content is downloaded onto the fixed storage device.

1 10. The system according to claim 1, wherein the auxiliary content is provided on
2 portable storage that stores the auxiliary content and is suitable for mass distribution.

1 11. The system according to claim 10, wherein the portable storage is a CD ROM and
2 the mass distribution technique is direct mail.

1 12. The system according to claim 10, wherein the portable storage is a CD ROM and
2 the mass distribution technique is placement (advertisement) in separately purchased
3 printed products.

1 13. The system according to claim 1, wherein the local storage is a removable storage
2 device installable in the client console.

1 14. The system according to claim 13, wherein said removable storage device
2 includes data structures thereon comprising a plurality of auxiliary content items, a
3 plurality of trigger data items logically associated, respectively, with each of said
4 auxiliary content items, and a user identifier.

1 15. The system according to claim 14, wherein said user identifier is uploaded to said
2 download management server to enable access to specified content in said primary
3 content database, and said user information is downloaded into said client console to
4 trigger execution of specified auxiliary content items based on comparison with said
5 trigger data items.

1 16. The system according to claim 15, wherein said user identifier comprises an
2 alphanumeric media ID identifying said removable storage device.

1 17. The system according to claim 1, wherein the auxiliary content is selected from
2 the group consisting of images, movies, music, games, customer surveys and lots.

1 18. The system of claim 1, wherein information is downloaded from the download
2 management server into the client console to trigger execution of specified auxiliary
3 content items based on comparison with the information.

1 19. A method for providing auxiliary content from a local storage device during
2 download of primary content from a server network over a bi-directional communications
3 network, comprising the steps of:

4 establishing a communications link between a client console and a download
5 management server that is part of the server network through the bi-directional
6 communications network, the client console having the local storage device installed
7 therein;

8 transmitting user identifier data contained on said local storage device and a
9 request for primary content to the download management server, in order to retrieve said
10 primary content from the download management server;

11 accessing the auxiliary content stored on the local storage device during download
12 of the primary content to the client console;

13 selecting the auxiliary content to be accessed by the client console based on user
14 information comprising preferences provided by either the client or a distributor of the
15 primary content.

1 20. The method according to claim 19, wherein said user identifier data comprises an
2 alphanumeric media ID identifying said local storage device and said local storage device
3 further contains an authentication code which enables access to said download
4 management server, further comprising the step of receiving said media ID and said
5 authentication code in said download management server, wherein one of said
6 authentication code and said media ID serves to limit access on the server network to
7 specified primary content only from among all primary content.

1 21. The method according to claim 19, wherein said step of accessing said auxiliary
2 content further comprises comparing said user information with trigger data logically
3 associated with one or more auxiliary content items making up the auxiliary content.

1 22. The method according to claim 19, wherein said step of downloading into said
2 client console from said download management server comprises storing said primary
3 content on a local fixed storage device disposed internally or externally of said client
4 console.

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1 23. A method of operating a client console having a removable storage device
2 installable therein while connecting with a download management server through a
3 bi-directional communications network, comprising the steps of:
4 determining whether said removable storage device requires connection to said
5 bi-directional communications network for operation in said client console;
6 establishing a communications link between a client console and the download
7 management server through said bi-directional communications network, if it is
8 determined that the removable storage device requires a network connection;
9 transmitting user identifier data contained on said removable storage device and a
10 request for primary content to said download management server;
11 downloading requested primary content and user information from said download
12 management server to said client console;
13 comparing said user information with trigger data logically associated with an
14 auxiliary content item making up the auxiliary content; and
15 determining whether a control function of said client console is enabled for
16 permitting viewing of said auxiliary content.

1 24. The method according to claim 23, further comprising a step of continuously
2 surveying to determine whether the client console user overrides playback of said
3 auxiliary content during execution of said primary content.

1 25. A system for providing auxiliary content during download of primary content
2 from a server, comprising:

3 a server network comprising a download management server and a primary
4 content database that stores primary content; and
5 local storage for storing auxiliary content, wherein the auxiliary content is stored
6 in the local storage prior to download of the primary content from the download
7 management server;
8 wherein access is enabled to requested primary content in the primary content
9 database, and the auxiliary content stored in the local storage device is played during
10 download of the requested primary content.

1 26. A system for providing auxiliary content during download of primary content
2 from a server, comprising:

3 a server network comprising a download management server, a customer database
4 that stores customer information, and a primary content database that stores primary
5 content; and
6 local storage that stores auxiliary content, wherein the auxiliary content is stored
7 in the local storage prior to download of the primary content from the download
8 management server;

9 wherein a customer identifier is uploaded to the download management server,
10 access is enabled to requested primary content in the primary content database, and the
11 auxiliary content stored in the local storage device is played by during download of the
12 requested primary content.